

My Animals: Do-At-Home Activities

These activities help young children learn how to move their bodies, to develop language skills, connect animals with the sounds they make, and follow instructions.



Drop and Talk

(Good for 12- to 15-month-olds)

Your toddler is learning how things move. Toddlers love to drop things to see what happens. If your toddler likes to drop things, give him a paper napkin to drop and let him watch how the air moves it. Say, "Look, the napkin is flying down to the floor. It swooped over by the table." Give him a ball to drop. Say, "Look, the ball is bouncing and bouncing." Give him other unbreakable items, one at a time, and tell him how they sound and what is happening to them.

What Does It Say? What Sound Does It Make?

(Good for 18- to 24-month-olds)

Look at the *My Animal Book* together. Point to a picture of an animal and ask, "What does a _____ say?" If your toddler doesn't know, tell him. For example, point to the picture of a dog and ask, "What does a dog say? A dog says, Woof, Woof." Point to the picture of something else that makes a sound, such as a fire engine or a clock or a windshield wiper. Ask your child what sound it makes and tell her if she doesn't know. You are helping your child connect sounds and objects.

Move Like the Animals

(Good for 15- to 18-month-olds)

★ After you have read the book once or twice, let your toddler move like the animals in the book. For example, point to the picture of the rabbit. Ask your child to hop like a rabbit. Have her try to move like some of the other animals, like jump like a goat, stretch like a cat, fly like a bird, crawl like a turtle, or run like a horse. Let your child use her imagination on how animals might move.

Would You Please?

(Good for 24- to 30-month-olds)

Start this game with the words, "Would you please," and then ask your toddler to do one thing. For example, "Would you please hop up and down?" If your toddler understands how to play, ask her to do one other thing. For example, "Would you please shake your head?" If your toddler can follow one direction, try two. For example, "Would you please hop up and down and then run over to me?" "Would you please pick up your book and put it on the table?" Toddlers can only remember two or three directions at a time, so don't make it too hard. You will see the wheels turning in her head as she thinks about what she has to do.

Literacy and Language Development

What your child is doing

- Holds and walks with book
- Turns board book pages
- Shows you what she wants
- Looks at a person who is talking to her
- Nods her head "yes"

What your child is saying and learning

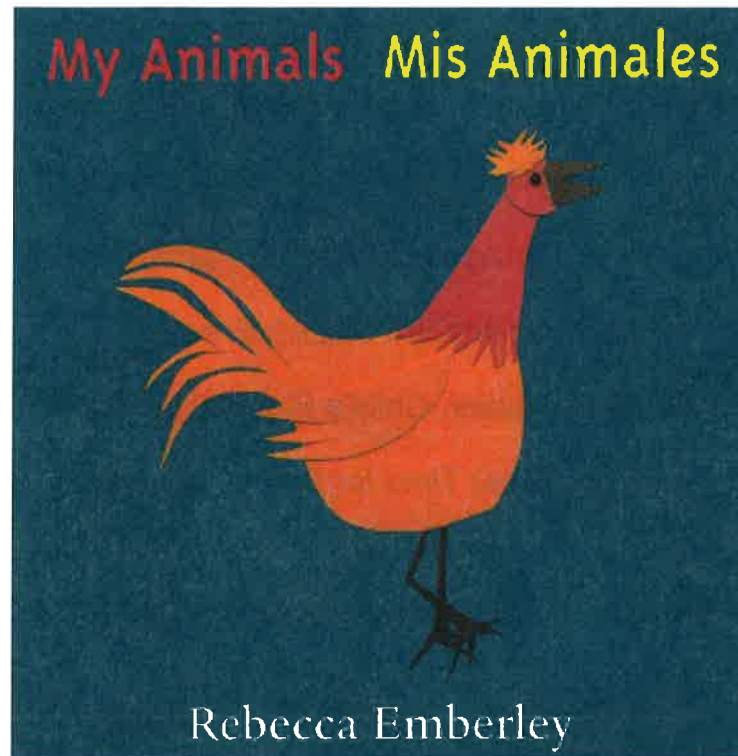
- Knows about 90 words
- Gives book to adult to read
- Turns book right side up
- Points at pictures
- Wants to learn the names of things
- Says single words



What you can do

- When child points to something, tell him the name of it
- Point and say the word many times
- Notice and talk about what child is looking at
- Let him help turn pages
- Use books in daily routines, such as naptime, bedtime or after snack
- Talk simply, clearly and slowly to your child
- Try to read with you toddler every day. It's okay to stop if your toddler gets tired or fidgety and start again at another time

Suggestions for Reading *My Animals* to Toddlers



Read all or parts of the book to your toddler. Here are some strategies for having a good time reading *My Animals*:

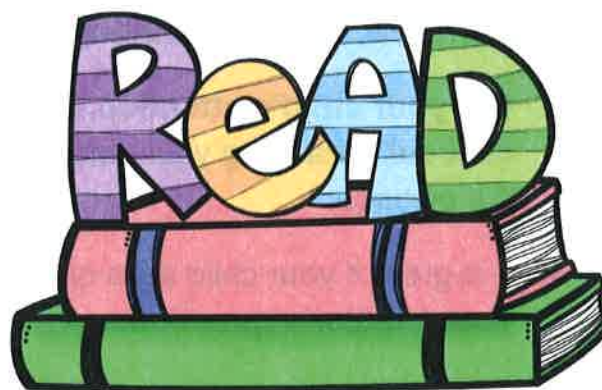
- Point to the pictures of each animal in the book. You are helping your young child learn new things by **pointing to pictures and naming them**.
- **Get your child's attention** by asking about the pictures in the book, tapping on the book, changing your voice, or taking your child's hand and having her touch the pictures.
- It is great if your child asks questions and gets excited about the book. **Answer your toddler's questions.**

My Animals is best for toddlers ages 15-18 months, but can be used for younger or older children as well.

Other Books for This Age

We tend to think that learning to read begins with learning the alphabet. However, children first need to be aware of the individual sounds that make up words. The rhymes in nursery rhymes help children pay attention to how words sound.

- *Hey Diddle Diddle* by Kate Toms. Make Believe Ideas, 2012
- *Hickory Dickory Dock* by Parragon Books Ltd. Parragon Books Ltd., 2003
- *Bedtime Lullaby* by Roger Priddy. St. Martin's Press, 2013
- *Humpty Dumpty* by Annie Kubler. Child's Play, 2010
- (Anytime Book: Daily Routines) *Time for Bed* by Mem Fox. Hartcourt, 1993



University of Nevada
Cooperative Extension

The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a place of work and learning free of discrimination on the basis of a person's age, disability, whether actual or perceived by others (including service-connected disabilities), gender (including pregnancy related conditions), military status or military obligations, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, national origin, race, or religion. Where discrimination is found to have occurred, the University will act to stop the discrimination, to prevent its recurrence, to remedy its effects, and to discipline those responsible.

Head and Shoulders

Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes,
Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes,

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes.

(Have parents and toddlers stand and touch each
body part as you sing them.)



Head and Shoulders

Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes,
Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes,

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
Head and shoulders,
knees and toes,
knees and toes.

(Have parents and toddlers stand and touch each
body part as you sing them.)



